

## SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

mother. Tell her to pray, and to make all her daughters pray for us. Find Niccolo, the poor man of Romagna, and tell him that I am about to go to Rome, and that he must take heart and pray to God for us."<sup>1</sup> "Pray the supreme eternal goodness of God," she wrote to Suora Daniella, " that He may do with us what may be His honour and the salvation of souls ; and especially now that I am to go to Rome to fulfil the will of Christ crucified and of His vicar. I do not know which way I shall take. Pray Christ sweet Jesus that He send us by that which is most to His honour, with peace and quiet to our souls." <sup>2</sup>

Catherine reached Rome on November 28, 1378, the first Sunday in Advent, *con molta pace*, as she wrote to Stefano Maconi, who was detained at Siena by family affairs.<sup>8</sup> A large band of men and women accompanied her, including Alessa, Cecca, Lisa, Giovanna di Capo, Neri di Landoccio, Barduccio Canigiani, Gabriele Piccolomini, Fra Bartolommeo di Domenico, Fra Santi, and Giovanni Tantucci. " Many more would have come," writes Raimondo, "if she had not forbidden it. Those who came committed themselves to the Divine Providence in voluntary poverty, choosing rather to go wandering and begging with the holy virgin, than, by staying in comfort in their own houses, to be deprived of such sweet and virtuous conversation."<sup>4</sup> Raimondo himself, who was still prior of the Minerva, met them in Rome, and Lapa seems to have joined them later. On November 30, Lando di Francesco, then in Rome as ambassador of Siena to obtain the restitution of Talamone, wrote to the Signoria: "Caterina di Monna Lapa has come here, and our lord the Pope has seen and heard her right gladly. It is not known what he

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Letter V. Monna Pavola, the head of a house of spiritual women in Fiesole, and Niccoli, a Romagnole beggar in Florence, were already among Catherine's correspondents.

<sup>2</sup> Letter 316 (165).

<sup>8</sup> Letter 319 (255). A portion of this letter, apparently in Barduccio's autograph, is preserved in the MS. T. iii. 3, at Siena. The statement of Earth. Senensis, *op. at.*, Lib. I. cap. 10, that Stefano accompanied Catherine to Rome and wished to be sent as her ambassador to Naples, is manifestly erroneous.

\* *Legenda*, III. i. 3 (§ 333).